

Administration of Barack Obama, 2014

Remarks at "Christmas in Washington"

December 14, 2014

Thank you! Thank you so much. Everybody, have a seat. Merry Christmas, everybody. Give it up for Santa's biggest, baddest elf: our host, The Rock. Dwayne is tough as nails on the outside, but as you heard earlier, he is a big softie on the inside. Even played me once on "Saturday Night Live." [Laughter] You can see the resemblance. I have a little more hair. [Laughter]

I want to thank all the incredible performers for dazzling us with their talents tonight. Give them a big round of applause. And we want to thank all the people behind the scenes who've helped make this wonderful event possible every single year.

For 33 years, "Christmas in Washington" has benefited a remarkable institution, Children's National Medical Center. That's where dedicated medical professionals provide world-class care to our most precious resource—our children—every single day of the year. Of course, this holiday is all about the birth of a child more than 2,000 years ago. A young soon-to-be mother and her husband of modest means traveled to Bethlehem and sought shelter for the night, and they found it in a manger. And in the lowliest of surroundings, a Savior was born who would change the world.

Jesus Christ lived a life of peace, of love and kindness and forgiveness. He ministered to the poor and to the sick, to the stranger and the outcast on society's margins. His life of service teaches us that our individual salvation is wrapped up in the salvation of others. And two millennia later, it lifts the hearts of billions around the world, Christians and non-Christians alike.

In the hustle and bustle of Christmas season, may we all do our best to follow his example, to reach out to someone whose Christmas isn't so jolly, to turn our blessings into kindness and compassion, to treat one another the way we would like to be treated. That's the real Christmas spirit.

To all our men and women in uniform serving far from home and to the families who miss them, we thank you for your service and sacrifice, and we're thinking of you this holiday season. And to every American, from the Obama family to yours, merry Christmas. God bless you, and God bless America.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:32 p.m. at the National Building Museum. In his remarks, he referred to actor Dwayne D. "The Rock" Johnson.

Categories: Addresses and Remarks : "Christmas in Washington".

Locations: Washington, DC.

Names: Johnson, Dwayne D. "The Rock".

Subjects: Armed Forces, U.S. : Military families; Armed Forces, U.S. : Servicemembers :: Service and dedication; District of Columbia : Children's National Medical Center in Washington; Holidays and special observances : Christmas.

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